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Jackson County on board with proposal to amend the U.S. Constitution

By JoDee Brooke

Tuesday, April 3rd, Wisconsin residents in nine communities voted to amend the U.S. Constitution to clarify only human beings should have inalienable human rights, and money is not the same thing as free speech.

Members of Jackson County's Executive and Finance Committee approved a resolution April 9 authorizing an advisory referendum in the Nov. 6, 2018 election that will state, "Should the United States Constitution be amended to establish that regulating political contributions and spending is not equivalent to limiting freedom of speech, by stating that only human beings, not corporations, unions or PACs (Political Action Committees) are entitled to constitution rights?"

Voting "Yes" supports limiting spending by corporation, unions or PACs by amending the U.S. Constitution to overturn Citizens United versus Federal Elections Commission decision that equated regulating political contributions with restricting freedom of speech. A Yes vote supports the position that "only human beings, not corporations, are entitled to constitution rights."

A "No" vote would support unlimited spending by corporations, unions or PACs and does not amend the constitution, but would leave intact the Citizens United versus Federal Elections Commission decision. A No vote supports the position that corporation, union and PAC spending on elections cannot be limited under the First Amendment.

As of last week, around 129 Wisconsin communities have called for an amendment. In total, about three million people (52% of Wisconsinites)

live in these jurisdictions. Across the country, 19 state legislatures have voted for an amendment, as well as over 770 towns, villages, cities and counties.

"It's passing with large numbers," shared Gaylord Opegaard of Jackson County.

Resolutions calling for a statewide Citizens United advisory referendum have been introduced into the state legislature in every session since 2013. The referendum would ask voters if they support allowing individuals and corporations to spend unlimited amounts of money on political campaigns.

Jackson County's resolution says, "The constitutional right to speak freely should not be determined by the available finances of the speaker or their power and status in society."

"It's basically too much money in politics and it doesn't matter what political party you're affiliated with," said Opegaard.